


RAPHAEL ROOM • NORTH WALL

201  Containing works made for both religious and domestic settings by Italian Renaissance artists, this room is named for the painter Raphael (1483–1520) who has long been celebrated as exemplifying Renaissance grace and elegance. Isabella Gardner hung two paintings by Raphael here: a small panel from an altarpiece made early in his career and a portrait painted in his maturity. Two large wedding chests (*cassoni* in Italian) are placed against the walls of this room, as they would have been in an affluent Renaissance domestic interior.

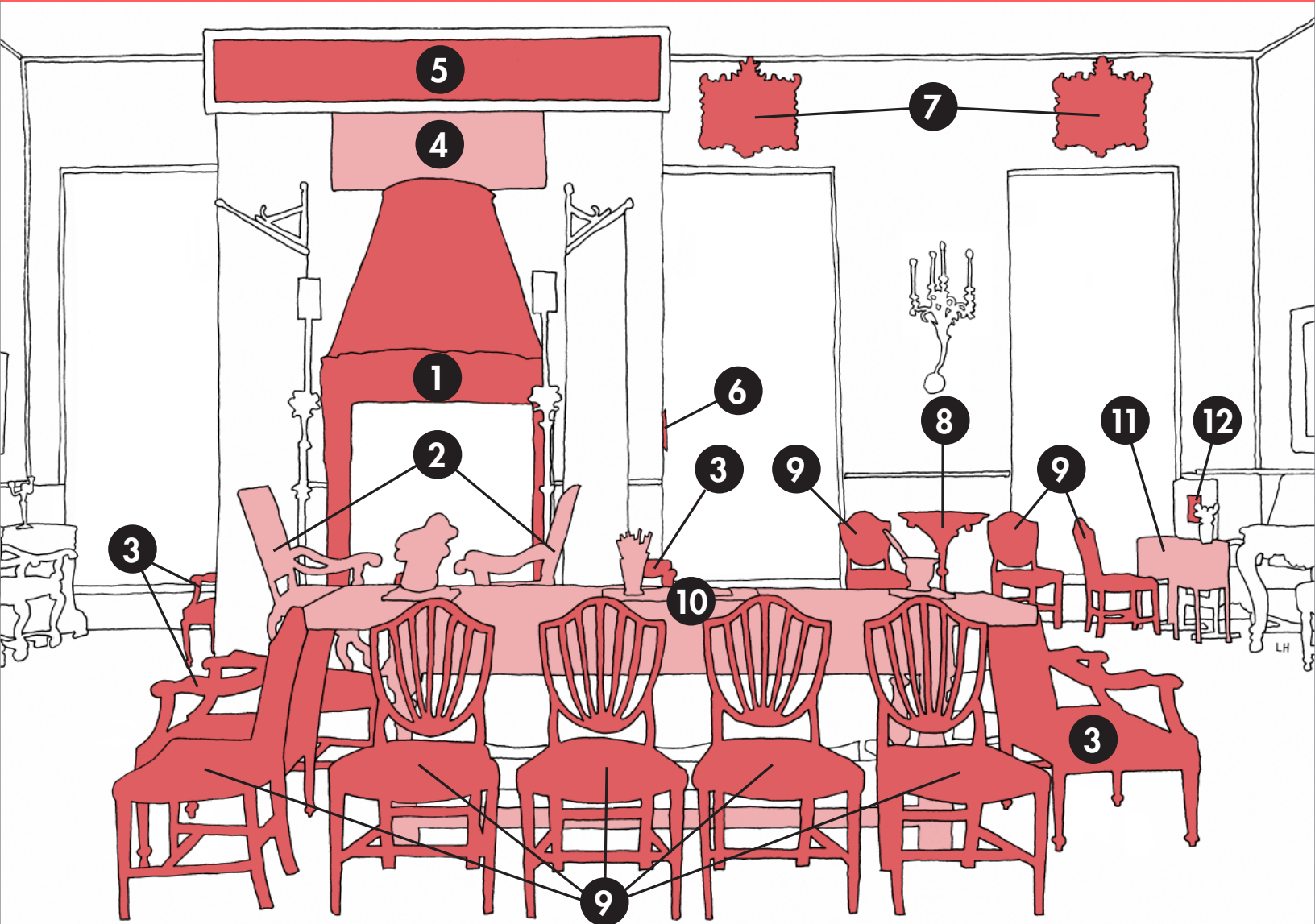


Raphael
Italian, 1483–1520
Pietà, 1503–05
Oil on wood

In this small panel Raphael created an arrangement of varied pose and color, and the figures exhibit his trademark sweetness of emotion. Before a somewhat realistic landscape (as opposed to the flat, gold ground of earlier religious paintings), Saint John and the Virgin Mary tenderly support the dead Christ. Joseph of Arimathea and Nicodemus, who brought Christ down from the cross, frame the group, and Mary Magdalene kneels to kiss Christ's foot.

The painting originally formed part of the lower section (*predella*) of a large altarpiece with scenes from the life of Christ, which Raphael painted for a convent in Perugia. Isabella Gardner set this painting on a table, with a chair positioned as if to allow close, personal contemplation of the picture. She arranged the display perpendicular to the window, to catch daylight for viewing.

RAPHAEL ROOM • NORTH WALL



1. Fireplace Apron, with inscription: *Motu et Lumine* (Motion and Light). Italian, 15th century. The canopy above is modern.

2. Armchair. Italian (Venice), early 18th century. Wood

3. Armchair (four in this room). Italian (Venice), first half of the 18th century. Wood

4. Furnishing Fabric. Italian, 1600–1650. Silk velvet and gilt yarn

5. Old Testament Scenes, 1650–1725. North Italian. Oil on canvas

6. Plate: The Nativity. Italian (Urbino), about 1540–1550. Majolica

7. Mirrors etched with mythological scenes (four in this room). Italian (Venice), 19th century. Glass

8. Tripod. Italian, 15th century (?). Iron. Holds a large bronze **Basin**.

9. Chair (set of 14 in this room: 1 sofa and 13 side chairs). Italian, late 18th century. Wood

10. On the table in the center of the room:

Silenus with a Winesack. Greco-Roman, 2nd–3rd century. Marble

Tumbler (holds tapers for lighting candles). Bohemian, about 1730. Glass and gold


Belt Buckle. Eurasian, 1st or 2nd century. Bronze

Mortar and Pestle. Italian, 19th century. Bronze

11. Writing Desk. English, mid-19th century. Wood

12. Pietà, about 1504. Raphael (Italian, 1483–1520). Oil on wood

RAPHAEL ROOM • EAST WALL

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Carlo Crivelli
Italian, 1430–1495
Saint George Slaying the Dragon,
1470
Tempera and gold on wood

To keep a fearsome dragon at bay, citizens of the town had to feed it their children. When the king's daughter was sent to be sacrificed to the dragon, Saint George happened along and slew the beast. Lively and dramatic, Crivelli's inventive style combines detailed naturalism with a flat, gold background and stylized landscape. The calm, cool demeanor of the saint contrasts with the frightened, rearing horse, which dominates the picture. Jewel-like with its rich colors, expanse of gold, and raised plaster details, this painting once was part of an altarpiece.



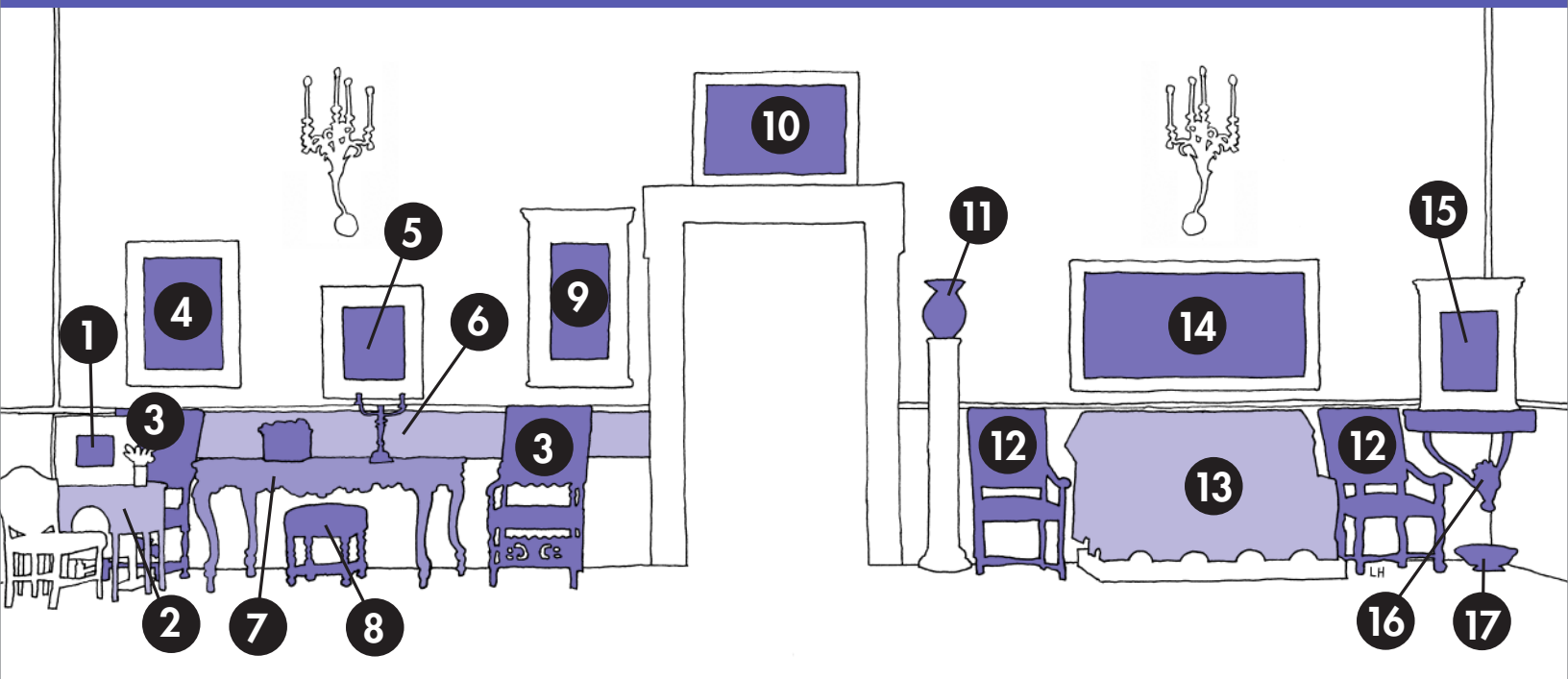
Sandro Botticelli
Italian, 1444/45–1510
The Tragedy of Lucretia, about 1500–1501
Oil on wood

The setting is Rome around the year 510 BC, a period when noblemen fought to overthrow King Tarquin. Botticelli used the architectural setting to organize the narrative. At left, the king's son attacks Lucretia, the virtuous wife of a nobleman. At right, her husband discovers Lucretia as she kills herself rather than bring shame to her family. Before the central arch, Lucius Junius Brutus exhorts his fellow citizens to overthrow the king and establish republican rule in Rome.

In fifteenth-century Italy, the story of Lucretia celebrated chastity and self-sacrifice, but it also warned against the evils of tyrants. Botticelli painted this work to decorate a palace in Florence in connection with a marriage. Perhaps with this in mind, Isabella Gardner placed a *cassone*, or wedding chest, beneath it.

The Renaissance bride filled her *cassone* with prized and personal belongings—linens, undergarments, jewelry, cosmetics, and sewing implements. Mrs. Gardner draped a velvet textile (now a reproduction) over this *cassone* and put inside other textiles and an eighteenth-century guitar.

RAPHAEL ROOM • EAST WALL



1. **Pietà**, about 1504. Raphael (Italian, 1483–1520). Oil on wood

2. **Writing desk**. English, mid-19th century. Wood

3. **Armchair**. Italian (Venice), about 1700. Wood

4. **Portrait of Tommaso Inghirami**, about 1516. Raphael (Italian, 1483–1520) and workshop. Oil on canvas

5. **Virgin and Child with a Goldfinch**, about 1510–17. Il Francia (Italian, 1450–1517/18). Oil on wood

6. **Furnishing Borders**. Probably Italian, about 1675–1750. Silk satin velvet; appliquéd embroidery

7. **Table**. Italian, mid-18th century. Gilded wood with marble top

On the table: silver-plated Sheffield **Candelabrum** (one of a pair: the other is across the room on the large commode), early 19th century; terracotta **Cinerarium (container for ashes)**, Etruscan, about 150 BC

8. **Stool** (one of three in this room). Italian, mid-17th century. Wood

9. **Saint George Slaying the Dragon**, 1470. Carlo Crivelli (Italian, 1430–1495). Tempera and gold on wood

10. **Virgin and Child, with Scenes from the Lives of Saint George and Saint Martin**, about 1395. Francesc Comes

(Spanish, active 1380–1417). Tempera and gold on wood

11. **Pitcher**. Italian, 3rd century BC. Terra cotta

12. **Armchair**. Italian (Venice), early 18th century. Wood

13. **Cassone (wedding chest): A Procession with the Arms of the Piccolomini and Spannocchi Families**. Italian (Siena), 1470s. Painted and gilded wood

Draped over the chest: A velvet **Textile** (modern reproduction of an 18th century original).

Inside the chest: **Guitar**, Jacopa Mosca-Cavelli, 18th century; **Chausable (liturgical vestment)**, 16th century with some modern replacements; **Embroidered Panel**, probably Anatolia (part of modern-day Turkey), 17th–18th century


14. **The Tragedy of Lucretia**, about 1500–1501. Sandro Botticelli (Italian, 1444/45–1510). Oil on wood

15. **Virgin and Child**, early 1470s. Giovanni Bellini (Italian, about 1431/36–1516). Tempera and oil on wood


16. **Corner Bracket**. Italian (Venice), 18th century. Gilded wood with ancient Roman marble top

17. **Bowl**. Roman (Pompeii), 1st century BC–2nd century. Bronze

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 **18** Piermatteo d'Amelia
Italian, active 1450–1500
The Annunciation, about 1475
Tempera on wood

During the Renaissance, the subject of the archangel Gabriel appearing to the Virgin Mary to say she will bear the son of God was often depicted in dramatic architectural settings. Here, the spill of their draperies connects the figures; at the same time, the figures are separated by the steeply receding perspective between them. Think about Mary's response to her otherworldly visitor. What do her body language and facial expression suggest to you?

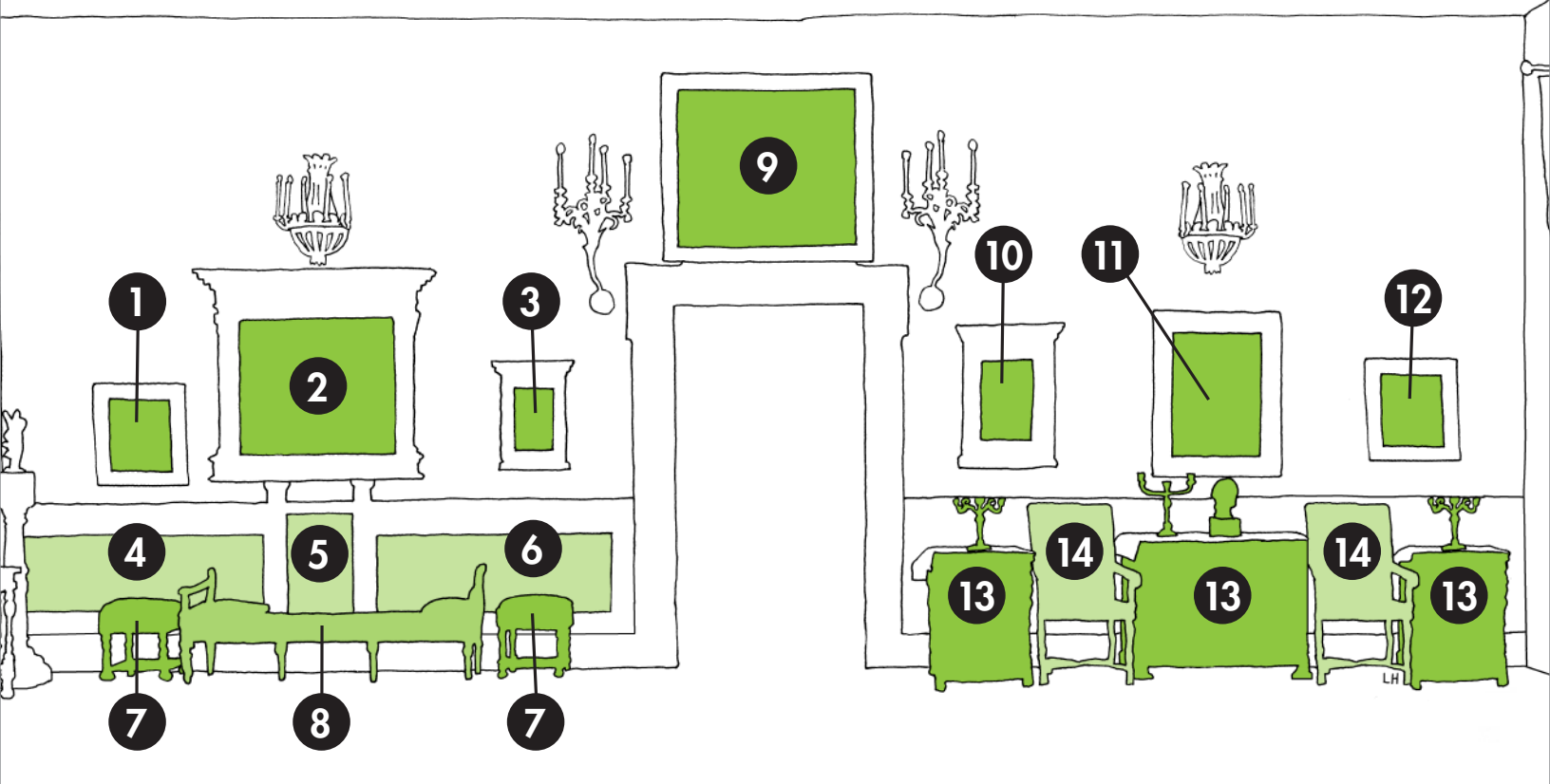
This painting was made for the main altar of a church in Amelia, a small town near Spoleto, in Umbria. The highly architectural frame is decorated with columns similar to those in the painting.




Francesco Pesellino 
Italian, 1422–1457 **17**
Virgin and Child with a Swallow,
mid-1450s
Tempera on wood

Pesellino and his assistants painted almost forty replicas of this painting, making a stencil that they used to trace the design onto other panels. In late-fifteenth century Florence, demand was great for such small, personal depictions of the Virgin and Child, and they became a standard feature of many middle- and upper-class homes. The Christ Child here is remarkably lifelike: cute and chubby, he cradles a swallow. The background suggests a sculptural niche in a fifteenth-century church, giving the still figures an otherworldly, iconic character.

RAPHAEL ROOM • WEST WALL



1. **Virgin and Child**, early 16th century. Studio of Cima da Conegliano (Italian, about 1459–1517). Oil on wood

 2. **The Annunciation**, about 1475. Piermatteo d'Amelia (Italian, active 1450–1500). Tempera on wood

3. **Profile Portrait of a Woman**, 1490s. Piero del Pollaiuolo (Italian, about 1441–about 1496). Oil on wood

4. **Cassone Front: Ancient Procession and Battle**, about 1500. Giovanni Maria Falconetto (Italian, 1468–1535). Oil on wood

5. **Furnishing Fabric: Crowned double eagle emblem of Hapsburg emperors**. Holy Roman Empire, 1675–1750. Silk satin, gold, and linen

6. **Cassone Front: Standing Leopards**. Italian (Tuscany), 1470s. Gessoed wood with remains of gilding

7. **Stool** (three in this room). Italian, mid-17th century. Wood

8. **Settee**. Italian (Venice), 1750–1800. Painted and gilded wood

9. **The Adoration of the Statue of Nebuchadnezzar**. Unknown painter (Italian, 16th century). Oil on wood

10. **Virgin and Child with a Swallow**, mid-1450s. Francesco Pesellino (Italian, 1422–1457). Tempera on wood

11. **Virgin and Child in the Clouds**, late 1400s. Italian, influenced by Andrea Mantegna. Tempera and oil on canvas

12. **Virgin and Child with John the Baptist**, 1470s. Francesco Botticini (Italian, 1446–1497). Tempera on wood

13. **Commode and Pair of Cabinets**. Italian (Venice), about 1800. Wood, inlaid with ivory and mother-of-pearl

On each piece: **Sheffield Candelabrum**.

English, late 18th century. Plated silver


On the commode: **Head of a Goddess**.

Greco-Roman, 1st–2nd century. Marble

14. **Armchair**. Italian (Venice), first half of the 18th century. Wood

Ceiling: low-relief design by Boston interior decorator Blanche Colman, 1902

RAPHAEL ROOM • SOUTH WALL

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Neroccio de' Landi
Italian, 1447–1500
Ancient Warriors in Armor, about 1490
Tempera and gold on wood

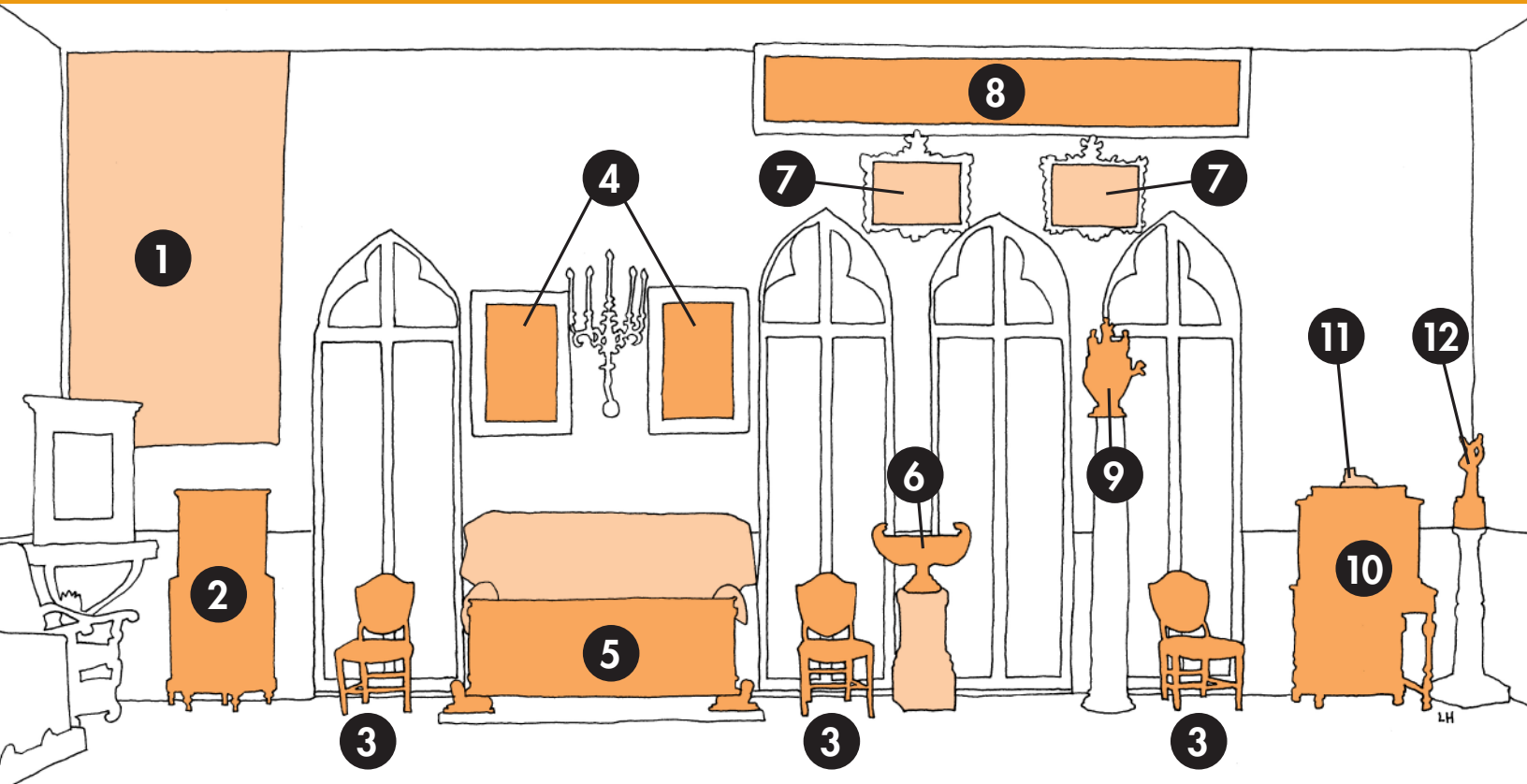
These two paintings were part of a group of images of ancient heroes that were set into the walls of a Renaissance interior. With their ornate costumes, rakish pose (one hip thrust out), and long hair, the figures merge classical heroes with fashionable young men of Renaissance Italy. The Renaissance enthusiasm for such heroic figures may be found in other works in this gallery. Look for Romans with drawn swords in *The Tragedy of Lucretia* and the figure of Saint George battling a dragon.

Cope (ecclesiastical vestment)
Modern reproduction of an Italian, late 16th century cope
Silk velvet

Isabella Gardner loved textiles and used them throughout the museum in eye-catching and often surprising arrangements. However, after being on continuous display since 1903, many textiles have deteriorated and—like this sumptuous cope—now are replaced with modern versions. This reproduction was made at a workshop in Italy, which used traditional looms to weave a fabric identical to the original textile. Since the cope had been pieced together from smaller pieces of fabric, textile conservators recreated the same effect in the new cope.

While in most museums conservation focuses on individual works of art, at the Gardner preserving the overall ambiance of each gallery is also important. As you look around this room, imagine how it would be different without this remarkable textile.

RAPHAEL ROOM • SOUTH WALL



1. Curtain with attached valence. Italian, 1650–1725. Silk velvet, with applications of gilt cloth and fringe

2. Cabinet. American, 19th century. Wood

Top two shelves: terracotta **Black-figure Vase**, Greek, 6th century BC; three terracotta **Figurines** in the Tanagra style (the two seated women are 19th century copies and the standing woman is Greek, 4th–3rd century BC)

Bottom shelves: Two **Fresco Fragments.** Roman, 1st century. Found at Boscoreale.

3. Chair (set of fourteen in this room). Italian, late 18th century. Wood

4. Ancient Warriors in Armor, about 1490. Neroccio de' Landi (Italian, 1447–1500). Tempera and gold on wood

5. Cassone (wedding chest). Northern Italian, late 15th century. Painted and gilded wood. Draped over the chest is a silk velvet **Cope** (modern reproduction of a late 16th century original) and inside are three **Chasubles** (modern reproductions of the 16th–18th centuries originals).

6. Bowl. Roman (restored in the 16th century). Marble. Supported by an **Altar** with reliefs of Pan dancing with maenads (female followers of Bacchus). Roman, 2nd–3rd century. Marble

7. Mirrors etched with mythological scenes (set of four in this room). Italian (Venice), 19th century. Glass

8. Old Testament Scenes, 1650–1725. Northern Italian. Oil on canvas

9. Vase: Medusa and three figures of Nike. Italian, 3rd century BC. Terra cotta

10. Cabinet. Italian, 19th century. Painted wood with mother-of-pearl inlay

11. Foot. Italian, 16th century. Marble

12. Saint Sebastian. Italian, 16th or 17th century. Alabaster. The sculpture sits on a 1st century Roman base.